1:Campbell E-5 (1954-1955)1964
EH14 Sarakatsani EH14
Zagori

some 'self-regard' (ἐγωϊσμός) but the family had to pay fifty shillings for this watch.

During the summer of 1954 Vasili worked for a Thessaly merchant who had come to the Epirus looking for wool. Vasili travelled around the Zagori countryside as his agent, buying up wool wherever he found it. By entering a price in his account book somewhat in excess of the amount he actually paid out, but still below the maximum buying price laid down in the merchant's instructions to him, he was able to make a very pleasing profit in addition to his weekly wage. When he returned to the family he gave almost all the profit to Theodoros but secretly withheld six pounds for himself. Vasili had been married only two years at the time, but his wife was expecting a child in the next month. His conscience was clearly troubled at the deception he was practising and in his confession to me he explained that three years ago there would have been no point in keeping any of the money to himself, but now he was married, his wife was about to have a child, and he vaguely felt the need to have some reserve of money which was entirely under his own control.

The wives of the four married brothers live together in one domestic unit and work under the direction of their mother-in-law. There are many practical advantages in this situation of which they are not unaware. When one wife is cooking the communal meal, another is collecting firewood or carrying water while the old mother-in-law watches over the children. There are goats to be milked, wild herbs to be collected, clothes to be washed. There is the whole lengthy process of spinning and weaving. In all these multifarious domestic tasks the collaboration of the five women makes for companionship and a certain economy of time and energy. But while the joint operations of the brothers with the sheep are based on a relationship of common identification, the co-operation of their wives is of a contractual character. The partnership works smoothly so long as each wife is thought to be pulling her weight in relation to her seniority. This clearly may often be a matter rather of opinion than obvious fact. And while the brothers are usually careful not to express any displeasure they may feel for one another, wives are only too ready to criticize one another in public.

Theodorina, the wife of Theodoros, is criticized because of

/190 cont./

494 182 These last statements permit one to say that on the economic level and on that of communal life, the Tseligato becomes the most efficient and at the same time the most important group of the Sarakatsani world. It therefore represents the best solution to these two major problems and the primary instrument of Sarakatsani adaptation to their natural and human environment.

Let us go on now to the examination of their economic system.

* * * *

121 433 The economic process of any society involves the acquisition and consumption of goods, work and its division, economic organization and, finally, the manner of distribution and accumulation of profit.

The first two points, acquisition and consumption, have been studied in connection with the Sarakatsani technology, from the point of view appropriate to the latter. It will suffice to consider them from the perspective of "needs to be met," in order to give them their full economic significance--an easy transposition which, moreover, requires no supplementary analysis. Acquisition by trade has been studied in connection with the extended family. The other aspects of this process have been examined through the analysis of the conjugal family, the extended family and the Tseligato. Thus all that is left for us is to try and bring out the principles according to which Sarakatsani economy is organized and functions and which give it its style.

438 439 /191/ Sarakatsani economy is a closed economy. We are not unmindful of the fact that ethnography as well as history have shown that no known economy is absolutely closed. Exchange takes place everywhere. However, it is certain that the Sarakatsani can, should the occasion arise, provide for their needs without having recourse to surrounding society, at least for a certain time. Milk and milk products, ample and wholesome food, can nourish them. The sector "manufacture-transformation-building" can function continually, or nearly so, without

/191 cont./

438 439 the necessity of contact with the outside. The share and the kind of goods and services that they obtain by trade, compared with the possibilities derived from their own environment, show that the Sarakatsani can dispense with them without upsetting their lives. These facts make them self-sufficient and offer them the possibility of avoiding any exchange if circumstances require it. The expression "closed economy" must therefore be understood in this particular sense.

233 731 In the second place, the economy of these herders is a specialized economy. It is based on a single productive activity, herding, which is not carried on without involving certain consequences. When conditions for the exercise of herding become unfavorable (for example, an epidemic), ruin is inevitable. Now, although the Tséligato as a financing body is in a position to remedy this situation, the extended family for its part provides able assistance. All the relatives not affected by the calamity must offer animals to the victims so that they can replenish their flocks. [602] Thus, the drawbacks of specialization are transformed into incentives for solidarity and cooperation. However, if these measures prove impracticable or insufficient, there is no alternative but the dissolution of the family and the Tséligato and the enrollment of their members in Tséligatos not afflicted.

433 [554] [934] The third principle of this economy is to be found in the fact that it must insure the Sarakatsani's subsistence and, in some cases, yield them significant social prestige. The speculation and risk peculiar to any commercial enterprise in which profit is an end in itself are unknown to them.

436 437 474 596 From the monetary point of view this economy operates under a double system. There is no circulation of money within the extended family or the Tséligato. All the payments that the head grants his subjects are in kind. In the Tséligato, money appears only at the moment when the seasonal accounting is completed /192/ and when the Tséligas distributes among the

/192 cont./
participants their share of the profits of the cooperative. On the other hand, money becomes very important at the time of dealings with the outside (purchases, renting of pastures, etc.).

Although, in daily life, the Sarakatsani does not need money, the Tseligas is obliged to have funds at his disposal permanently in order to handle the financial requirements of business and likewise to provide funds to his subjects if necessary.

In the fifth place, it must be emphasized that the Sarakatsani economy is cooperative economy in the sense that it tends toward the suppression of individualism and competition. The underlying assumptions and arrangements are distinctly unfavorable to the latter. There is, first of all, the organization of work on the basis of group membership, for if each of the fellow-workers tried to follow his own way, cooperation would vanish forthwith. Then there is the complete lack of special socio-professional groups--virtual hotbeds of antagonism and competition. Central management in the hands of one individual initiative. There is a strong organization and a system of joint ownership.

Finally--and this is the sixth and last principle of Sarakatsani economy, very revealing of their way of life--all the activities connected with "acquisition" properly speaking are carried out by the men only. On the other hand, in all cases having to do with "consumption" the activity is confined to the women.

Nevertheless, appearances sometimes seem to contradict this rule. The women engage in gathering, the raising of goats and occasionally poultry; they are also in charge of building. However, neither gathering nor the raising of poultry play an important role in Sarakatsani economy. In the tending of goats, women's competence is confined to milking and shearing. The most important aspect of the work, pasturing, is reserved for the men. Finally, the building of huts and sheepfolds does not represent a productive activity in the same sense as the others. By its nature it comes